

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 AID-20

CCO-00 FBO-01 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NIC-01 NSC-10

M-03 OC-06 OPR-02 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SCA-01 A-01

OMB-01 SS-15 SY-10 NEA-10 SCS-03 CIAE-00 NSAE-00

EUR-25 DODE-00 PC-15 RSR-01 /170 W

----- 090590

O 292127Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE NIACT 4728

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

EMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE 400

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES IMMEDIATE

AMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE 1085

AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE 1442

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO IMMEDIATE

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 2850

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINS, PINT, MILI

SUBJECT: ATTEMPT COUP

PASS DOD/DIA

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

1. FROM INFORMATION WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GATHER THUS FAR, IT
APPEARS THAT THIS MORNING'S MILITARY REBELLION WAS UNPLANNED
AND UNCOORDINATED. IT WAS APPARENTLY TRIGGERED WHEN AT APPROXI-
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MATELY 8:30 A.M. MILITARY OFFICERS UNDER ORDERS FROM GENERAL

PRATS ARRIVED AT HEADQUARTERS OF SECOND ARMORED REGIMENT TO RELIEVE REGIMENTAL COMMANDER, LT. COL. SOUPER, OF HIS COMMAND. ORDER APPARENTLY CONNECTED TO ALLEGED PLOTTING WHICH LED TO ARRESTS OF SEVERAL ARMY OFFICERS AND CIVILIANS JUNE 26 (SANTIAGO 2829). IT MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN RELATED TO COL. SOUPER'S REPORTED LINK TO PATRIA Y LIBERTAD.

2. WE UNDERSTAND THAT SOUPER'S REACTION WAS TO PLACE PRATS' EMISSARIES UNDER ARREST AND, WITHOUT COORDINATION WITH OTHER MILITARY UNITS, TO ORDER HIS REGIMENT TO MARCH ON MONEDA AND MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. AT LEAST SOME, BUT PERHAPS NOT ALL, OF REGIMENT'S TEN TANKS PLUS SEVERAL ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS LEFT REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS AT APPROXIMATELY 8:45 A.M. AND FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER REACHED THEIR DESTINATION. THEY SURROUNDED MONEDA, WHICH WAS DEFENDED BY PRESIDENTIAL GUARD OF CARABINEROS. AT MINISTRY OF DEFENSE THEY DEMANDED AND REPORTEDLY OBTAINED RELEASE OF SIX OFFICERS ARRESTED JUNE 26. WHAT SOUNDED LIKE HEAVY EXCHANGE OF FIRE TOOK PLACE BETWEEN 9 AND 9:15, WITH SPORADIC AND SOMETIMES HEAVY EXCHANGES DURING THE SUCCEEDING HOUR. SOME OF SOUPER'S TROOPS APPARENTLY GAINED ENTRANCE TO WING OF MONEDA OCCUPIED BY FOREIGN MINISTRY (ALTHOUGH THIS IS NOT CLEAR), BUT THEIR INTENTION SEEMED TO BE TO KEEP BUILDING SURROUNDED RATHER THAN TO GAIN CONTROL OF IT.

3. BY APPROXIMATELY 10:15 IT BECAME APPARENT THAT OTHER MILITARY UNITS WERE NOT JOINING SOUPER'S REBELLION. PRESIDENT ALLENDE, WHO HAD EARLIER CALLED WORKERS INTO CENTER OF CITY TO DEFEND GOVERNMENT, AMENDED HIS APPEAL TO SAY THAT HE HAD BEEN ASSURED OF FULL SUPPORT OF MILITARY AND THAT CIVILIANS SHOULD REMAIN OUT OF DOWNTOWN AREA. BY APPROXIMATELY 11:15 SOUPER'S TROOPS, STILL SURROUNDING MONEDA, WERE THEMSELVES SURROUNDED BY TROOPS LOYAL TO GOVERNMENT UNDER PERSONAL COMMAND OF GENERAL PRATS. FOR PERHAPS FIFTEEN MINUTES SITUATION APPEARED TO BE VERY MUCH IN DOUBT BUT THEN, WITH ADDITIONAL PRO-GOVERNMENT TROOPS TAKING UP STATION IN STREETS SURROUNDING MONEDA AND ABSENCE OF ANY SUPPORT, SOUPER'S TANKS WITHDREW TOWARD REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT SHORTLY THEREAFTER SOUPER SURRENDERED HIMSELF AND WAS PLACED UNDER MILITARY ARREST. PARTICIPATING PRO-GOVT TROOPS INCLUDED 1ST AND 3RD INFANTRY REGIMENTS AND CONFIDENTIAL

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AT LEAST ONE COMPANY FROM AIRBORNE SPECIAL FORCES BATTALION.

4. ALL BUSINESSES HAVE CLOSED AND NORMAL CIVILIAN ACTIVITY HAS SHUT DOWN. WE UNDERSTAND THAT MOST INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES HAVE CANCELLED SANTIAGO LANDINGS SCHEDULED FOR TODAY. ELECTRICAL AND TELEPHONE SERVICE, WHICH WAS DISRUPTED IN SEVERAL LARGE DISTRICTS OF THE CITY, HAS BEEN PARTIALLY RESTORED. UP UNTIL APPROXIMATELY 2:00 P.M. THERE WERE STILL ISOLATED INSTANCES OF GUNFIRE. IT IS

NOT CERTAIN WHETHER THESE WERE FROM SNIPER OR NERVOUS PRO-GOVT TROOPS.

5. AT 4:00 P.M. TROOPS WITHDREW FROM STREETS, TRAFFIC RESUMED, AND PRO-GOVT PARTISANS ARE GATHERING FOR WHAT UP RADIOS ADVERTISE AS "GIGANTIC" RALLY. CURFEW HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR 11 P.M. TONIGHT.

6. PRESIDENT SENT TO CONGRESS LATE THIS AFTERNOON BILL WHICH IF ENACTED WOULD GRANT HIM AUTHORITY FOR SIX MONTHS TO IMPOSE STATE OF SIEGE ON ANY PART OF COUNTRY OR ON ALL CHILE. HE ASKED FOR MOST URGENT CONSIDERATION FOR BILL. CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES HAS JUST BEGUN TO MEET.

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